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ABSTRACT

A setting is described in which an evaluation was used with significant impacts on policies and programs. Some of those impacts are delineated, types of utilization employed by staff within the system are illustrated, and conditions under which the evaluation was conducted to obtain such a high level of use are discussed. In the 1979-80 school year, an extensive process evaluation of the Title I program was conducted in a large Northeastern urban school district. To identify the process variables of study, two sources were used: a review of literature on effectiveness of compensatory programs and extensive interviews with individuals and groups involved in the program. Instruments were developed appropriate to the questions identified, and data were collected from students, regular classroom teachers, aides, reading and math consultants, social workers and principals. The school was the unit of study and regular feedback was provided to all parties on results summarized at various points in the study. Results indicated that the evaluation had substantial impact on program and policy changes, and that role groups in the broadest leadership positions (e.g. coordinator, principals) articulated the most instances of evaluation utilization. (RL)

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IMPACT OF A PROCESS EVALUATION ON AN URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEM'S POLICIES AND PRACTICES

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A body of literature on the utilization of educational evaluation for decision-making and program improvement has been rapidly developing over the past decade. The consensus for a while indicated--and the majority of evidence now still does--that evaluation findings do not contribute to program policy and activity changes and that evaluation is not utilized at the Federal, State or Local levels (David, 1978; Florio, 1979; Patton, 1978; Weiss, 1972).

A newer view of evaluation utilization is emerging, however. This view recognizes that the "non-use" results are often dependent upon the narrow definitions and analytical frameworks of the researchers. That is, while utilization is seldom defined, there is at least an implicit meaning, as stated by Patton (1978): "utilization occurs when there is an immediate, concrete, and observable effect on specific decisions and program activities resulting directly from evaluation research findings" (p. 24). The newer view asserts that there are many other potential uses of evaluations for program change or improvement. But in order to recognize these, we must broaden our definition of utilization and employ analytic frameworks consistent both with these definitions and with the object of the evaluation, usually program improvement.

The purposes of this paper are to:

1. describe a setting in which an evaluation was used with significant impacts on policies and programs;
2. delineate some of those impacts;
3. illustrate by types of utilization employed by staff within the system; and
4. discuss the conditions under which the evaluation was conducted to obtain such a high level of use.

Framework

We first wish to explicate a continuum across two views of evaluation utilization. Although this one dimensional, bi-polar continuum may be somewhat simplistic in view of Weiss's (1979) six models of research utilization, it was found useful as a starting point for guiding the study questions and interpreting the results.

At one end of the continuum is the concept of evaluation utilization as defined above by Patton. Studies employing this conception look for utilization only in decision-making situations of a rational-deductive type. This conception has several variations, but is characterized by Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963) as the synoptic conception as follows: "The ideal way to make policy is to choose among alternatives after careful and complete study of all possible courses of action and all their possible consequences and after an evaluation of those consequences in the light of one's values" (p. 40). Other examples of this view are March and Simon's (1958) "maximizing" and Weiss's (1979) knowledge-driven and problem-solving models. Studies employing such models in social policy areas find little utilization of evaluation or research results. Even in studies which allege no predetermined framework for recognizing utilization and ask decision-makers open-ended questions about how the evaluation was used, the predominant responses are often in line with this synoptic conception, and thus lack of utilization is concluded, as the example of David's (1978) Title I utilization study illustrates.

On the other hand, a more realistic view of possible uses of evaluation is at least conceptually explored by several authors by including less explicit, less rational-deductive, less linear types of use. For example, Weiss (1979) describes an enlightment model, in which research shapes the

way people think about issues, provides decision-makers with ways of making sense out of the complexity with which they deal, raises problems from previous non-issues, converts existing problems into non-problems, among others. Orvis and Salasin (1975) explore such uses of evalution in the change agentry process. Mitchell (1980), in an empirical study, found that, at the state legislative level, evaluations were at least implicitly used to contribute to problem definition, build group solidarity among support coalitions, and several generally to "refine and criticize - not to replace - other, more fundamental mechanisms for defining and resolving public policy issues" (p. 19).

These uses are based upon a strategy of decision-making labelled as disjointed incrementalism by Braybrooke and Lindblom (1963). This strategy assumes that decision-makers have a notion of the present conditions, policies and objectives and seek to improve their notions by additional information from several sources. As they do so, their notions develop in increments in relation to problems or decisions at hand. They respond to data in an active, reconstructive manner, transforming the problems and decisions as well as the interpretation of the data. They tend to focus on immediate problems rather than on long-term goals. When long-term goals are the focus, it is usually through a long series of policy steps.

In addition to the Braybrooke and Lindblom conception on the local level, there is the recognition that in looking for evaluation utilization among decision-makers, the people included in that category cannot be defined too narrowly. In education programs, not only do top and middle-level administrators make decisions which affect policy and program changes, but all personnel do to some degree. First, teachers, aides, parents and support personnel have opinions about policies and programs which at least implicitly, if not through explicit articulation, exert political influence on the

"higher-level" authorities. Second, these other role group members implement policies and programs in various ways. Thus, a policy or program's intention or even technology can be substantially shifted by those on the front lines of instruction. Third, non-administrative role groups are often allowed participation in the more general decision-making processes or are given a range of decision alternaties within, say, a district's general policy.

Study on research utilization in line with the latter end of the proposed continuum has been called for by those who have been in this field for some time. Wise (1978) indicates that, in studying such uses, "evaluation need not 'lower' their expectations for information uses, but they need to reformulate those expectations in light of new premises" (p. 23). Alkin (1975) concurs. And Weiss (1980) calls for "more systematic investigation of the effects of research and evaluation that is sensitive to the subtleties of the changes that are produced. We need to study the indirect diffusion of the ideas from research and the consequences of the new knowledge for the program agenda" (p. 77). That is what the present study intends to do in the context of an ESEA Title I program in an urban school district.

The evaluation of Title I is an especially critical area for such studies. It is the largest federally funded education program, and in its 1978 amendments calls for the local uses of evaluations for program improvement. Two previous studies of Title I evaluation use have concluded that it was rarely used at the local level (David, 1978; Hamilton, 1980). This paper will present findings contrary to those conclusions and discuss the conditions which we believe are responsible for the high level of utilization we observed.

Background and Methods

In the 1979-80 school year, an extensive process evaluation of the Title I program was conducted in a large Northeastern urban school district. The program operated in seven of the district's 12 schools. A district evaluator worked full-time under the direction of the district's Director of Research and Evaluation and with outside consultants providing technical assistance. To identify the process variables of study, two sources were used: a review of literature on effectiveness of compensatory programs and extensive interviews with individuals and groups involved in the program. The latter was done to determine what various role groups perceived as the key components of the program, what contributed to success, what should be studied, and what suggestions they had for the conduct of the study. From both the literature and the interview responses, a synthesis was done and eleven issues, with subquestions under each, were identified for study.

From the general issues and specific questions subsumed under each, instruments were developed appropriate to the questions. The instruments included questionnaires, interview protocols, and observation checklists. Data were collected from students, regular classroom teachers, aides and assistants, reading and math consultants, social workers and principals. The school was the unit of study and analysis, except for a random sample of individual students on the diagnostic/prescriptive activity issue wherein the individual was the unit. Finally, regular feedback was provided to all parties on results summarized at various points in the study. points in the study.

An "evaluation of the evaluation" also took place near the end of the year. This involved a questionnaire on the usefulness of the results administered to all adult personnel; collection of intradistrict memos

concerning the study's results and actions taken on them; and documentation of other known changes. In addition, a follow-up study of the uses of the evaluation was conducted by the Region I Title I Technical Assistance Center one year later. In this follow-up study a sample of 43 persons were interviewed, including one Central Office Administrator (the program Coordinator), six District Parent Advisory Council Members, five principals (those in charge of a Title I school both years), 14 14 teacher aides or assistants, five social workers (Title I funded), and 12 reading or math specialists (Title I funded, assigned to specific Title I schools). The interviews were conducted individually with all subjects, except in the cases of aides, assistants and specialists, who were interviewed in small groups in some instances.

The interview was largely structured, but some open-ended questions branched from closed-format questions. The content covered awareness of the evaluation process that took place last year, familarity with its reports, subjects' descriptions of actions taken in each of the eleven topics around which the process evaluation report was organized, specific questions on nine identified "types" of utilization, and judgments about the quality of the evaluation. Only the descriptions of actions and the "types" will be discussed in this paper. Most interviews were tape recorded, and the recordings were used to fill out the interviewers' notes and verify direct quotations.

Results

1. Program and policy impacts.

There is a preponderance of evidence that the evaluation had substantial impact on program and policy changes. Only a partial listing of such impacts is possible in this paper. For this study, impact is taken to mean: a reported or observed change in knowledge, attitude,

or behavior by program participants, which can be logically linked to the process evaluation, either consciously by the subjects' or by the interviewers' inference. The issue of impacts directed toward program improvement will be taken up later.

First, the district's evaluation questionnaire was distributed near the end of the school year to aides and assistants, Title I reading and math specialists, social workers, regular classroom teachers, principals, central office personnel, and PAC members. Of the 129 instruments distributed for anonymous response, 88 (68%) were returned. A particularly low return rate came from one role group only, the classroom teachers, from which only 53% of the 57 questionnaires were returned. Exlcuding this group of non-Title I personnel, the return rate was 81% for all those directly connected with the program.

The first evaluative question asked, "Do you feel that the results of the evaluation to date have been helpful and/or that the suggestions already made are likely to be helpful in the future?" Eighty-four percent of all respondents answered "Yes," 11% answered "No," and 4% indicated a "Qualified Yes."

The results to which the respondents had had access to that point were: two Title I Evaluation Bulletins, interim suggestions submitted to the Coordinator by the evaluator in a February memo, an Interim Report, its Executive Summary, and school-specific feedback sessions with the evaluator. Respondents were asked on the questionnaire to check the written documents which they had read. The responses indicated the range of percentages was from 55% for the Executive summary to 77% for the Evaluation Bulletins. Thus, the responses are based on a high degree of familiarity with the written results of the study and

the oral presentations, and the respondents can be assumed to be well-informed. In fact, to even get that many personnel reading the evaluation's results is an indicator of such high interest that further utilization can well be expected.

Further analysis of the responses to the first evaluation question provides some interesting results. Only two role groups included any "No" answers to the usefulness question, the aides/assistants (17%) and classroom teachers (23%). The qualified responses came exclusively from those two groups plus the subject consultants. These are all direct instruction personnel who indicate skepticism about usefulness. For all other groups, complete 100% "Yes" responses were evoked. The analysis of "who read what?" from the written documents available showed that the instructional personnel read considerably less than the non-instructional groups. This set of outcomes should really not be too surprising, for those staff members with complete direct instructional responsibilities necessarily focus their energies on day-to-day operations and provision of direct services, and not on the broader views of the system that program evaluation necessarily entails. Nor do they feel much confidence in their ability to affect policy decisions, was expressed by several such persons throughout the study. In fact, after this questionnaire was completed several of the "qualified Yes" respondents voluntarily sought out the evaluator to express their opinion that the evaluation results could be very useful, but that they "knew" that the administration would do nothing about them.

One set of findings from the process evaluation was that several areas of confusion existed among staff on the purposes and policies of the program. As a result of this information, a number of items requiring at least policy clarification and informing personnel of these policies were identified and an Evaluation Bulletin was issued to serve these two

functions. That is, the Coordinator raised the issues with the district PAC, obtained their consultation, and issued a lengthy statement in the Bulletin. Specifically, in a question and answer format, he articulated the legislative and district policies on Title I staff responsibilities to Title I and non-Title I students, the roles that locally funded reading consultants could play in Title I, the relationship between Special Education programs and Title I, the student selection process, and the sources of authority over and responsibility for aides and assistants. These clarifications were offered because some events discovered through the evaluation raised the possibility of lack of compliance with the Title I law and regulations, and the district wished to ameliorate these problem areas during the current year so as to be in unquestionable compliance by the start of the 1980-81 school year.

Each area of clarification had concrete implications for program change in schools where there was a violation. For instance, on the student selection issue, the definition of educational need in some schools was such that students who the classroom teacher thought needed additional help in, say, multiplication of fractions, were considered needy and given Title I assistance through that topic for a week or two, then given no more Title I work. That is, the Title I population changed as often as weekly. Those schools operating in such a manner could no longer continue to do so. Concerning the authority/responsibility of aides and assistants, in some schools they had reported to and received their directions from one or a few assigned regular classroom teachers. The policy stated that these responsibilities were to be with the Title I reading and math consultants instead. Thus, schools not following this policy had to change some aspects of their operation. Although it was not a part of this study to monitor such changes, informal observations

by the evaluator indicated that they were taking place, even if slowly and, sometimes, reluctantly.

Another source of program or decision-making impact information is that, after reading the Interim Report, the district PAC and the Coordinator made the voluntary commitment to use the descriptions of findings and recommendations from the Final Report as the basis of its agenda for the coming year. To capitalize upon that commitment, the evaluator suggested a partial plan for doing so in the report. Although this PAC commitment and attendant plan are no assurance that decisions and actions will follow, they do represent as much as could be expected to that point in terms of using the results. In comparison with other such attempts by districts, these events indicated a high probability of the evaluation's continued impact on program decisions and actions.

As part of the follow-up study this year, the Final Report of the process evaluation was used to generate a condensed summary of the findings and recommendations in each of the eleven topic areas. As the report presented its findings in detailed descriptive, narrative format, discrete findings would not be obvious to the casual reader of the report. There were a total of 43 separate findings and 49 recommendations. From the interview data, a tally was made of the number of recommendations directly used or slightly modified as reported by the subjects. It was found that 26 (or 53% of) such recommendations were implemented. Of these 26, 21 were used district-wide and five were used in at least one school, but not in all schools. As the descriptions below will show, many, if not most of the recommendations and attendant policy and program changes were not trival. They required substantial program or activity restructuring.

When analyzing the interview responses, a tally was made in the appropriate topic category (of the 11 used to organize the process evaluation) each time a program behavioral or attitude change was described by a subject. It could not, of course, be expected that all subjects would have all 26 implementations in the forefront of their consciousness at the time of the interview. Also, in line with the disjointed incrementalism framework, other impacts than just the 26 "synoptic" type were reported and analyzed. The sum of these tallies, by topic area, were obtained as a convenient device for rank ordering the topical salience of the impacts. The most salient are presented.

The topic most frequently mentioned, by over half of the respondents, was that of Diagnostic Testing and Prescriptive Program Writing. The process evaluation found that diagnostic test instruments used varied across the subject specialists, even within schools, which resulted in children being judged on different bases for inclusion in the program and for the types of instruction they should receive. This was viewed by many teachers as unfair to some children. It also found that there was a lack of consistency in specifying objectives for students, some got clear objectives, some vague, others none. The specialists had a thorough knowledge of each child's needs, but this was not recorded or documented in the school. And the standardized achievement test results arrived too late to be useful for diagnosis.

The responses on the district's part to these findings came from four sources. One, the program Coordinator (also an Assistant Superintendent) directed all schools to keep organized records on the Title I children, including at least their diagnostic test results, program prescriptions, and achievement test information. These records were shown to the interviewers in the five schools of the follow-up study.

The Coordinator also directed the subject specialists to use the same diagnostic battery for each of reading and math. Two, the principals (who are in charge of the Title I program in their respective schools) each took the initiative, after group discussions, to implement a complete prescriptive system in their schools, similar to the Special Education model. All schools showed at least substantial progress in this by February 1981. Three, the Research and Evaluation office returned the achievement test scores to the district in time to have them available as part of students' diagnostic information. Four, although there were expected complaints about the paperwork and meeting time involved in the IEPs, a few respondents indicated that the staff, including classroom teachers, had discussed informally that this system makes them feel more accountable for the children's progress, even though it is not being used for teacher accountability purposes.

The second most frequently mentioned topic, by almost half of the subjects, was that of Communications. The process evaluation found that communication of policies and procedures concerning goals, inservice training, diagnostic/prescriptive activities, student identification, and staff responsibilities were inadequate. Also, classroom teachers of Title I students received insufficient information about these students' progress and about the general program's purposes. Finally, there was no one central source of Title I information in each school, so that tracking down relevant information was often a major task.

Impacts in the Communications area are as follows. The district PAC developed a Title I brochure which was made available for schools to disseminate to staff and parents. That group also expressed its desire to have each school PAC distribute a monthly newsletter on Title I, which appears to be sporadically implemented. In each school visited,

however, a system is in place by which the parents of Title I children are contacted immediately upon identification by either a letter from the principal or a letter or personal contact by the social worker. Through this contact the purpose of Title I is made clear, the program for the child is described, a sign-off approval form is obtained, a request to join the local PAC is made, and contact information is transmitted. Two of the five schools reported substantially increased school PAC membership this year over last, a result attributed by the subjects to the occurrence of this communication. And finally, regarding parent communication, an "exit" letter was developed in one school for parents of children who "achieve out" of the program.

Concerning the instructional and support staff, a team approach is now implemented in most schools for Title I services. That is, there are regular meetings among the different staff groups who work with specified children. For instance, in one school there are weekly meetings among the aide/assistant, subject specialist, and regular classroom teacher who work with a given group of students, and the social worker and Special Education teacher are also involved where appropriate. Such a team arrangement exists in all schools now, though the frequency of their scheduled meetings varies from weekly to monthly. These meetings are most often connected with the IEP work, as described above, but are reported to lead to general sharing of effective and ineffective instructional approaches with individual children. Some aides particularly report as one benefit of these meetings that they obtain fairly immediate and continuous feedback from the teachers on the progress of the children in their joint charge, and that this helps them be better tutors rather than mainly "paperwork assistants" as they'd previously felt themselves to be.

Finally, as a general type of impact within this topic, many respondents reported that they would not have been in favor of so much meeting time if the evaluation report had not brought out the service gaps that existed during the previous year. That is, such meetings, even if enforced by the principal or another authority, would have been minimal in both frequency and participant involvement. In other words, the evaluation laid the foundation for the success (so far) of this new structure.

An extensive listing such as shown for the two topics above could go on at length for each of five of the other topics, and shorter lists for the remaining four. In briefer summary, concerning Inservice Training, aides/assistants now receive weekly or bi-weekly inservice directly from the subject specialists in all five schools, in response to needs the process evaluation showed. These sessions include development of instructional skills, content knowledge, and materials development and use. Aides are also included in all regular faculty inservice in at least one school where they hadn't before been included.

The actions taken in the Goals and Objectives topic are possibly the most pervasive, though mentioned by only about one-fourth of the respondents. That is, the Coordinator and the district PAC, in direct response to a host of problems they wished to address, instituted a system-wide Title I Task Force to develop plans for refocusing the goals and scope of the program and for a variety of other issues. This Task Force is composed of some 15 members, chosen such that each Title I school and each role group is represented, plus the district Reading and Math Consultants. The group meets at least monthly. Its work is not yet completed, but thus far it has closely examined the achievement tet results of the program, pinpointed areas of

special concern from those, explored approaches taken by outside exemplary compensatory programs, received a training session on a goal formulation procedure and pinpointed difficulties in the student selection process. Observations as part of the follow-up study indicate that major decisions are immenent on a method for narrowing down the program scope, for determining school and student eligibility, and for concentrating resources more effectively on the neediest students.

While many of the impacts noted above might fit the synoptic better than the incremental end, several were discovered which do not. These impacts do not fall neatly into the eleven topic areas and are presented here as general impacts. First, in addition to the evaluation's descriptive findings on the eleven topics, the search was made for demonstrated relationship between program characteristics or process factors and student achievement using both the school and student as units of analysis. No clear relationships could be found. The program Coordinator reported finding this particularly disturbing, for

> It leads me to question the value of our program if we can't pinpoint the sources of (achievement) impacts.

This result served to stimulate him and others, as he reports, to give close scrutiny to the whole program, take a hard line on what they value and do not value in it. Furthermore, as a result of this finding being thoroughly documented and explored in the evaluation,

> This questioning can now be discussed in the PAC and School Board where it couldn't before.

Second, one of the interview questions asked, "In general, would you say that the process evaluation was successful or valuable?" Most subjects answered "YES" and gave a host of reasons, most of which could be summarized as:

> Having a description of what we're doing down in black and white in the report gives legitimacy and concreteness to discussions about the program's strengths and weaknesses, on a common basis within the system.
>
> It put program components and individuals' jobs into perspective.
>
> It gives us an organized approach to program development.

The impact here is on program participants' awareness, helping them define problems, form priorities, presenting alternative courses of action for individuals to judge their own responsibilities and needs and to consider them in relation to the whole system. This is surely the enlightment function described by Weiss earlier. This awareness and common framework makes the potential for program improvement much greater since there is a broad spectrum of equally well-informed people (recall the questionnaire results from above) ready to discuss common issues and thus make more informed decisions, or at least understand the basis for decisions made by others.

Third, the evaluation apparently stimulated the principals to become more active leaders of the Title I programs in their schools. One of the evaluator's recommendations was that each principal appoint <u>one</u> staff member in each school as the person responsible for all Title I activities. The Central Office rewrote the principal's job descriptions to fix that responsibility with them. Several principals mentioned in the interviews specific initiatives they had taken within their respective schools to improve the program. Whether the addition of the statement in the job description was accompanied by more Central Office force than is apparent, or if the principals applied more charisma to Title I from their own initiative is not known by us, but several aides and a few subject specialists fairly glowed about the increased "leadership" they now see in the principals. This is a curious finding, because principals' instructional leadership was

one of the most common success related factors in compensatory programs identified in the literature at the outset of the process evaluation. It was deliberately excluded, however, as a topic of study because of the fear that it was too sensitive an area. But, one way or another, this evaluation seems to have enhanced that dimension of program improvement.

As a fourth general impact area, it must be admitted that not all evaluation impacts were positive, at least in subjects' perceptions. For one, the prescriptive process generated much complaint because of the overburdening paperwork it requires. Two, the strict student selection policy and stable Title I population now adhered to doesn't allow the Title I staff to work with many kids they think need the program, those kids as one aide put it,

> "just above the eligibility cutoff, who could benefit from just a little extra help."

Three, the aides now keep monitoring records of their activities with Title I students, find it a burden, and attribute it to the evaluation report (in fact, it is not mentioned in the report). Fourth, the Task Force is presently considering concentrating the Title I resources in fewer schools and grade levels, which some staff, especially aides, are threatened by, for it could mean the loss of their jobs. While most change is painful to some degree, even in the face of long-term benefits, if the foregoing negative reactions are so pervasive as to outweigh the benefits in staffs' minds, then these impacts could indeed be harmful to the program.

2. Types of utilization.

The foregoing presentation focused on actions taken, for the most part, though some illustrations of both ends of the synoptic - incremental

continuum were presented. This portion of the analysis and results more directly address that continuum. In designing the study, a typology of ways in which people might cognitively or otherwise process the evaluation information was developed. This typology was derived from experience with valuations and generally from the Braybrooke and Lindblom continuum. A further criterion was that the types should be ones which could reasonably be argued to contribute to program improvement. The following eight types resulted:

I. Synoptic

   A. directly implement a recommendation

   B. use as "backup" data to defend/promote a program or policy

   C. prioritize clear decision alternatives

II. Mix

   A. modify recommendation to solve a problem

   B. clarify facets of a problem already somewhat known

III. Incremental

   A. instigate awareness of problems or undesirable conditions

   B. change job/role expectations

   C. change overall judgment of program quality

      1. positive direction

      2. negative direction

(A ninth type was originally identified--publicize results of the evaluation--but it did not appear to fit the continuum and no respondents indicated using it, so it was dropped from further consideration.)

Next, interview questions were developed around each type. Some questions were direct, such as, Were there any problems or undesirable conditions in the Title I program that the process evaluation made you or

others aware of?, for III.A. Others were less direct, as for type III.C.:

> Before this evaluation took place, how would you have rated the overall quality of the Title I program? (5 point scale with descriptors given).
>
> Now, having seen the results of the evaluation, how would you rate the program? (same response scale)
>
> (If change) Was there anything about the evaluation that made you change your mind?

The analysis for the typology consisted of tallying each type for which the respondent answered "Yes" and could give a description of an event to illustrate that use and the inteviewers made the judgment that the response properly indicated that type. Additionally, tallies were also made by inference from responses to "impacts" questions, when the respondent described a type without knowing it. Frequencies of each type's occurrence, by role group and totals, are shown in Table 1.

The results of the typology data serve three purposes. One, they provide crude positive test of the hypothesis that there are many uses of evaluation results from the incremental or "enlightment" models which can be identified. That is, there are uses of evaluation possible which deviate from the synoptic, linear, or rational-deductive models.

Sixty-eight, or 28 percent of the total type classifications are of the incremental type, and 60, or 25 percent are of the mix type. While the quality of the data is not sufficient to let the numbers speak for themselves, or making exacting interpretations from comparisons across them, the fact that the incremental and mix instances occur more than the synoptic ones (128 vs. 114), suggests that people make constructive and substantially frequent use of evaluations in the incremental ways. This substantiates Weiss' and Braybrooke and Lindblom's propositions. In

Table 1
Frequency of Utilization Types, By Role Group

Type	Role Group: Subject Specialists (N=12)	Social Worker (N=5)	Aides/ Assistants (N=14)	Principals (N=5)	PAC (N=6)	Central Office (N=1)	Totals
I. SYNOPTIC							
A. directly implement recommendation	17	21	10	26	20	12	106
B. provide "backup"	1	1		2	2	2	8
C. prioritize alternatives							
Synoptic Total	18	22	10	28	22	14	114
II. MIX							
A. modify recommendations	10	7	2	15	11	5	50
B. clarify facets	1	1		4	4		10
Mix total	11	8	2	19	15	5	60
III. INCREMENTAL							
A. instigate awareness		1		5	11	4	21
B. change role	6	4	5	4	3	3	25
C. change judgment							
1. positive	8	4		3	2	2	19
2. negative			1	2			3
Incremental Total	14	9	6	14	16	9	68
Grand Total	43	39	18	61	53	28	242
Ratio GT:N	3.58	7.80	0.78	12.20	8.83	28.0	

children, that they have the "best" structures in place. Only two respondents of the 43 referred to achievement test scores on this question. And in one of those cases, even though the scores were viewed as disappointing, the respondent improved his judgment because of the program changes that have been made.

The type involving job/role expectation changes were very straightforward. For instance, the aides now play more of an instructional role and do less help with the paperwork, and the subject specialists provide more inservice. Two PAC members, however, reported unexpected role changes. As a result of the evaluation they report that they now get more involved involved in the details of the program at their schools. As one put it

> I used to be afraid to go in and find out what was going on, like I was snooping. Since the evaluation opened that up (looking into the schools) I feel its okay to get in and observe and talk to teachers.

Given Title I emphasis on parent involvement with the program, this has to be viewed as an effect of the evaluation on program improvement (assuming the constructive contributions of such parents, of course).

Type III.A., instigating awareness of problems existing, was reported more frequently by PAC members than by others. Nine different, clearly defined problem areas were cited in the eleven responses to this effect. This is probably so predominant for the PAC members because, although they have a great deal of advisory authority and concern for the broad areas of the program, they are in the schools less than staff members and, thus, had their "eyes opened" the most by the evaluation.

There is a subtle difference between the type immediately above and Type II.B., clarifying facets of a problem of which people were already somewhat aware. The intended meanings of this latter type, as stated

fact, notable by absence of any occurrence is Type I.C., prioritizing among alternative decisions. This is one of the often repeated features in descriptions of the rational-deductive decision-making process. Yet it was not mentioned by any respondent in this study, nor could it be inferred through the study of the field notes. It may be, however, that such prioritization occurs in a less deliberate and articulable way than the interviews could elicit. Possibly longitudinal observations of decision-making groups or repeated interviews over time could identify this type.

Second, examples of respondents' descriptions of each type serve to illustrate these uses in detail. On Type III.C.,one social worker changed his overall judgment of the quality of the program from "good, with a few minor shortcomings" to "outstanding," because

> There is a system now to document our progress. We have a way of looking at it through the IEPs and the periodic assessments. Also, the reading specialists are the coordinators of teams that work with ther kids. The responsibility is fixed.

While it was not the evaluation report itself which changed his judgment, the report and the resultant program changes are both viewed as one entity by this person, and since the evaluation pinpointed what were felt to be shortcomings and action was taken, the program is judged as better. On the other hand, a principal who's view of the program was lowered, did so because

> Now I know that where I thought we were wasn't where we were. We aren't the program we could be.

One feature implicit in the two foregoing comments, as well as most of the others in response to this question is that program personnel judge the quality of their programs, not by achievement results, but by their sense that they're doing as much as possible to educate the

in the interview probes, included: That is, put into words something that you suspected but were unsure of; got the "facts;" see that the problem was more (or less) widespread than you thought. As one principal responded

> We were each individually aware of problems but hadn't been reporting them..."covering." This report brought it out on the table and we had to face them.

Providing "backup" data from the evaluation to defend or promote a desired change was occasionally used, mostly by administrators. The Coordinator continually refers to the evaluation findings to "backup" his moves to insure legal compliance in several areas. One principal reports using the findings to promote his school's change from "pullout" to "in class" programs. And a Task Force member reports using the report to argue against any suggestion in that group to reduce the size of the math component.

The third use of the typology data in Table 1 concerns comparisons across role groups. Once again, detailed comparisons are unwarranted by the data, but a pattern is visible. The three role groups in the most broad leadership positions (Coordinator, PAC, and principals) articulate the most instances of evaluation utilization, as shown by the ratio of statements per person in Table 1. This is not surprising since their roles demand more attention to the decision-making process and they have the broadest scope of the program as their responsibilities. In terms of formal decision-making responsibility, breadth of involvement, and the data, the social workers and the specialists are ranked next, and the aides/assistants show least articulation of uses in the areas of interest.

Reasons for Utilization

Since a major point was made in this report that the evaluation had substantial impact on programs and policies, the question is raised: Why? By describing some of the characteristics of the evaluation procedures and setting, some understanding can be provided.

In contrast to the studies cited earlier which found little use of Title I evaluations, this process evaluation provided more content than just the Title I Evaluation and Reporting System (TIERS) requirements, which focus on achievement information. Given the widespread dissatisfaction of the testing-only model of evaluation among school personnel, it is not hard to see why David (1978) and Hamilton (1980) found such little utilization. But such dissatisfaction is not restricted to the testing-only model. When this process evaluation began, and its scope and purpose were explained to people in the system, there was some skepticism expressed. It appears to have been overcome. To be fair to TIERS, it is a system originally designed for State and Federal level reporting and may well serve that purpose as intended. The rub comes in expectig too much of its use for local program improvement. As discussed in the results above, school personnel seem to judge the quality of their programs on the consistency of their programs with their values and on the efforts they expend, not so much on achievement test results (unless, perhaps, the achievement scores are good). This process evaluation gave most attention to descriptions of programs, activities, and role responsibilities, conent to which that the school personnel could "relate" and personalize.

Related to the content of the evaluation was the format of the report. All respondents in our follow-up study indicated that it was appropriate, with a few expressing the qualification that it was too

lengthly. But it provided richly detailed descriptions, only spotted with tables, figures and charts. There was "something for everyone."

Another key feature was that the program staff was involved in defining the issues of study. This was a lengthly process providing a monumental synthesizing job, but it appeared to have been worth the effort. The evaluator, at the outset, met with representatives of every role group and asked: What do you think is most critical to the success of your program?, What do you think should be evaluated?, and Do you have any suggestions for how we conduct this evaluation? Not all suggestions could be incorporated, of course, but the scope of the study sought a fine balance between breadth across issues and depth in each. Also, an annotated list of the final issues and procedures was presented back to all staff so that they saw just what resulted from their initial input to the evaluator and what further information they would be expected to provide.

A factor which was not considered in the deliberate design of the study, was that the evaluator began uncovering problems with procedures that were not, or might not have been in compliance with Title I laws and regulations. Recently prior administrative turnovers in the district may have been the reason these problems crept into the system. But in any case, the realization of compliance problems stiumlated quick, decisive and pervasive action. This may have gotten the utilization impetus started, with the resulting inertia continuing the utilization impacts.

Further, the evaluator was not an "evaluator". He'd had no training or experience in that role, which appeared in this case to have been a benefit. He was a well experienced teacher, administrator, and special projects staff member who knew schools, school people, and children

inside-out. He had also been working within this school system for the previous two years and was thus familiar with the people and the structures therein. He had a rapport with people that allowed him to get information otherwise not given to outsiders. Also, his treatment of the data in reports was appropriate more to his "peers" than the usual evaluator's would be to "clients." He did not lose people in the mysterious technology of the evaluation process. In a similar vein, the recommendations in the report were written in "realistic" terms for the most part. That is, they jibed with the structures, time commitments, interests, and needs of the district personnel.

Finally, reporting was timely, a feature repeatedly mentioned as necessary for evaluation utilization. Feedback and summaries of results were distributed fairly continuously. Newsletters reporting overall system results on major issues were disseminated, and oral presentations were made at each school after data were collected. When it was realized that the PAC would be making final policy decisions for the next year's program before the Final Report was planned, an Interim Report was issued presenting the findings and recommendations to that point, in time for the PAC's deliberations.

These procedural items are consistent with suggestions made by several others as conditions necessary for the utilization of evaluation results. On the basis of this study it is impossible to generalize that these factors are necessary and/or sufficient conditions for increasing utilization. But they do indicate some concrete instances of the two fundamental requirements Patton (1978) proposes for utilization focused evaluation:

> First, relevant decision-makers and information users must be identified and organized - real, visible, specific, and caring human beings, not ephemeral, general, and abstract audiences', organizations, or agencies. Second, evaluators must work actively, reactively, and adaptively with these identified decision-makers and information users to make all other decisions about the evaluation - decisions about the research focus, design, methods, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination (p. 284).

Beyond that, according to Patton, "everything else is a matter for negotiation, adaptation, selection, and matching (p. 284)." It is likely that this district's results were so extensively utilized, not because of the specific procedures listed above in themselves, but because the process evaluation followed those two fundamental requirements. The procedures above, then, are merely the embodiments of the requirements in that concrete situation.

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